

Early Vancouver

Volume Five

By: Major J.S. Matthews, V.D.

2011 Edition (Originally Published 1945)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1936-1945.

Supplemental to volumes one, two, three and four collected in 1931, 1932 and 1934.

About the 2011 Edition

The 2011 edition is a transcription of the original work collected and published by Major Matthews. Handwritten marginalia and corrections Matthews made to his text over the years have been incorporated and some typographical errors have been corrected, but no other editorial work has been undertaken. The edition and its online presentation was produced by the City of Vancouver Archives to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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like a Siwash.' You know how it is. Half-breeds either rise or go down; some of them do well; others just go back to Indian."

SUE MOODY OF MOODYVILLE. "NAVY JACK." JOHN THOMAS.

"My father" (Benjamin Campbell McCord) "was a Campbell on his mother's side; he was a clever man, and always made friends with the best men; he was a great friend of Sue Moody, and Moody was slack of work, so he put my father and 'Navy Jack' out hand logging up Jervis Inlet; they got some supplies, about \$800 worth, and went hand logging up Jervis Inlet; and Navy Jack took his Indian wife with him, and my mother went along, too. But Navy Jack was not like my father; my father was an intelligent man; Navy Jack wasn't; and they quarrelled, and Navy Jack pulled out and left his Indian wife. Then Navy Jack got that place in West Vancouver, near Dundarave, now, and after that he was bartender in Gastown, bartender for John Robertson of the 'Hole in the Wall' saloon."

EARLY CEMETERIES. BROCKTON POINT. NINE O'CLOCK GUN.

(I showed Mrs. Smith a crayon drawing of the "Park Road" near the Nine O'Clock Gun.)

"No. The graveyard in Stanley Park was not" (as Dr. Langis states) "at the Nine O'Clock Gun; how could it be? That was where Johnnie Baker lived; the graves were nearer Brockton Point; some day I'll show you the exact place, but they were not by the gun, but about there" (pointing to the deepest part of the bend in the road towards Brockton Point) "about 100 or 200 yards further on. Baker's must have cleared the site on the point where the gun is; I suppose they did; Baker cured fish there; they had their little place on the point right where the gun is; he was a Scotchman, too. No, the graves were in the bend of the road."

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH. SUNDAY SCHOOL.

"I remember the little Baptist Church on Westminster Avenue" (Main Street); "stumps all around it; just a little bit of a place, about as big as this room" (pointing to a space about 20 x 36), "a little entrance at the side, with a little pointed top over it, and inside, benches and a stove, and a bit of a pulpit in the middle of the far" (east) "end. I joined it because I asked to join it. We children, the Spinks, Townleys, McTaggarts and Nicksons, all used to be going along all dressed up, flocking along from the West End to the churches in the east end; all the churches, Presbyterian, Methodist, and St. James, were in the east end then, and on a Sunday afternoon, all the children, one after the other, used to walk along together."

FIRE CHIEF J.H. CARLISLE.

"One day I asked if I could go to the little Baptist church on Westminster Avenue, and they said, 'Yes'; Chief Carlisle used to look after it. The same children afterwards used to go to the little school on Burrard Street, where they afterwards built the big Aberdeen school."

15 FEBRUARY 1937 – MEMO OF CONVERSATION WITH CAPT. CHAS. E. SPRING, RETIRED, 2284 WEST 8TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, WHO, TOGETHER WITH MRS. SPRING, CALLED AT THE CITY ARCHIVES.

Capt. Spring and his father (Capt. Spring also) were heavily interested in sealing, and sealing vessels on the North Pacific, owned several schooners—the largest, the *Favorite*, 100 tons—and suffered severe financial loss during the 1890s due to the Bering Sea Treaty. They formerly resided at Victoria, but since 1920 at Vancouver. Capt. Spring was born on 16 February 1859 at Queensborough, in the Crown Colony of British Columbia, 1859, then a separate colony from Vancouver Island; the same year, 1859, as an infant, went with Capt. Spring, Sr., his father, and his mother, to Victoria, Vancouver's Island, then a separate colony. They have a son who is a wireless operator on the *Empress of Asia*. Capt. Spring is now, 1937, probably the oldest resident of Vancouver born on the mainland, 16 February 1859.

J.S.M.

(Note: Mr. Spring died 11 February 1938.)

EXCERPTS.

Letter, F.W. Alexander, 23 June 1936. (Mr. Alexander was born, 1869, son of R.H. Alexander, manager, Hastings Sawmill.)

I don't recall her name, but she was a French bark which loaded lumber at the Hastings Sawmill and was THE FIRST AND ONLY vessel which endeavored to sail out of the inlet. [Note: she did successfully.]

Conversation, J.H. Scales, *Early Vancouver*, Matthews. (Mr. Scales came to Burrard Inlet about 1867.)

I never saw but one vessel sail in; she sailed in the Narrows; prettiest thing you ever saw. Usually the old *Isabel*, Capt. Stamp's boat, towed them in.

THE FIRST NARROWS. SAILING SHIPS.

Capt. Spring said: "Father sometimes came to Burrard Inlet—I came with him as a young boy to load lumber for California at the Hastings Mill or Moodyville; we also took coal from Nanaimo. We did this in our largest sailing schooner only, the *Favorite*, of 100 tons, which could carry a small cargo of lumber.

"The way we entered the Narrows was to put out the stern boat and a crew of, perhaps, five men, to go ahead of the schooner *Favorite* with a line from the bow. Of course, we always waited until wind and tide were favourable, and then came right through. The reason for the boat with line ahead was to keep her bow in the right direction; the eddies were strong and swirling, and it needed something just to keep her straight."

ISABELL. FIRST TOWBOAT. CAPT. STAMP.

"The *Isabell* was the first real towboat on the B.C. coast. The old *Fly* did a little; then they built a bit of a boat, the — *Harris*" (I think he said *Grace Harris*), "but she was a poor thing; the *Isabell* was a great improvement; Capt. Stamp built her at Port Alberni."

EXCERPT, LETTER, CAPT. CHAS. E. SPRING, 20 FEBRUARY 1937.

Regarding the method used in early days by vessels navigating the First Narrows.

Mr. Alexander's statement is probably correct insofar as vessels over tonnage is concerned, as it was not usual for shipmasters to dare take the risk of sailing through the Narrows without a pilot or tug, except in cases where they were familiar with the waters, and such shipmasters were few.

With regard to vessels under tonnage, they very frequently sailed right into Burrard Inlet to their berth at the mill, but of course this was done only when conditions were favorable. Such as on one occasion with father, having a commanding breeze, and not too strong a flood tide, we sailed right in to our anchorage without having to put a boat ahead. On another occasion we came to anchor off Siwash Rock, and held on to get under way just before low water slack, so as to tow in with the ship's boat ahead in a dead calm, with five men in the boat, and so towed to our berth at Hastings Mill.

Bricks.

As an illustration of neglecting to order a boat ahead to steady the ship's head. In 1886, after Vancouver's great fire, building material was in demand there. One of my vessels, the schooner "Aldred Adams" of Victoria, with a cargo of bricks for Vancouver, sailing in with a light air and no boat ahead, was swept by the current right on to the north shore of the First Narrows, where she remained until floated off, and warped out into the stream without damage on the same tide.

EXCERPT, LETTER, CAPT. CHAS. E. SPRING, 2284 WEST EIGHTH AVENUE, 27 FEBRUARY 1937.

Tonnage.

Over and under tonnage of vessels. These are terms which in former days applied to the British Columbia Pilotage regulations, effecting vessels over and under the regulation limit of 250 tons register; going and coming from a foreign port; wherein over tonnage was compulsory, and under was optional, as to whether or not a pilot was taken.

Except in cases of over tonnage vessels, where the master was familiar with the local conditions of the locality, and had the necessary backbone for the task; he could be his own pilot.

Whereas in cases of under tonnage vessels where exempt from the regulations, such master, on accepting the services of a pilot, would be subject to the regulation rate on the register tonnage of his vessel, when a specific sum was not agreed upon.

A 100 ton schooner, such as the "Favorite" would measure about

Length [blank]

Beam [blank]

Depth [blank]

[LETTER FROM DERBY TO J. LYLE TELFORD.]

Knowsley,
Prescot,
Lancashire.

25 October 1939.

My dear Sir:

I cannot tell you how touched and grateful I am for your more than kind letter which shows the affection that you have in Vancouver for my father.

I did hope that perhaps it would have been possible for me to have been present this year at the 50th anniversary, but Lady Derby and I are both getting rather too old for such a long journey, and even if we had accepted I am afraid the War would have prevented it.

Your letter and the beautiful Album of views which you were good enough to send me brought back to me very vividly the particular day of the Dedication of the Park. I was with my Father as A.D.C. all through that long trip that he paid to the West of Canada, and especially to your town, which hardly merited the name of town then, but which now can be called a City. It is a very pleasant recollection. As you rightly say, I was honeymooning. I had been married in the previous January, and both Lady Derby and I often talk over that trip to the West. It is a memory which can never die.

I do wish that written words of mine could convey to you the gratitude which Lady Derby and I feel to you for your most kind and generous letter. With all our hearts we reiterate those words of my Father when he asked the Almighty to bless your great Park for the use and pleasure of future generations of all colours, creeds and customs. Long may it act up to that wish, and no-one is more sincere in wishing to Vancouver every possible happiness and prosperity than are Lady Derby and myself.

Yours very sincerely,

DERBY.

J. Lyle Telford Esq., M.D., M.L.A.
Mayor of Vancouver.